R. D.

SOME

REMARKS

On the late

Biſhop *Lloyd*'s Hypotheſis

OF

Daniel's Prophecy

OF THE

SEVENTY WEEKS.

In a LETTER *to the Reverend Mr.* MARSHAL, *Rector of* Naunton *in* Glouceſterſhire.

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C.S.

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Reverend SIR,

THE Notice which you were pleas'd to take of me, in your Vindication of the late Biſhop *Lloyd*'s Hypotheſis of the Prophecy of the Seventy Weeks, has at laſt, upon two Accounts, induc'd me to publiſh ſome Remarks on that Hypotheſis.

Firſt, That I may ſhew my Reaſons for having offer'd to the World ſuch an Explication of the ſaid Prophecy, as was in every Reſpect different from that which had been given by that Learned Man.

Secondly, That I may prepare the Way for a favourable Reception of an Anſwer to your Objections againſt my Eſſay.

Without any farther Introduction, the Remarks which I have to lay before you, on the Hypotheſis which you ſo earneſtly contend for, are theſe following:

I. That there is by it no Reaſon aſſign'd, either why in the Prophecy Weeks are mention'd rather than Years; or, ſince Weeks are mention'd rather than Years, why Seventy was to be the Number of the Weeks determined, rather than any other Number.

No Expoſition of the Weeks as yet given, nor any to be hereafter advanc'd, will ever give Satisfaction, if it does not rationally account for theſe two Particulars.

II. By the Hypotheſis which you have eſpous'd, the Beginning of the Seventy Weeks is plac'd in the 20th Year of *Artaxerxes Longimanus*.

And the placing the Beginning of the ſaid Weeks in the ſaid Year, is founded upon two Suppoſitions:

2

1. That

1. That before *Nehemiah*'s Arrival at *Jeruſalem* in the ſaid Year, the Wall and Gates of *Jeruſalem* had not been rebuilt ſince the Time of their having been broken down and burnt by *Nebuchadnezzar* King of *Babylon*.

2. That the Decree mention'd in the Prophecy, for the Reſtoration and Rebuilding of *Jeruſalem*, was iſſued out by *Artaxerxes Longimanus*, in the ſaid 20th Year of his Reign.

The firſt of theſe Suppoſitions is directly contrary to what *Nehemiah* himſelf has written of this Affair.

For, the Reaſon why he was mov'd to deſire Leave of *Artaxerxes Longimanus*, in the 20th Year of his Reign, to go to *Jeruſalem*, was upon the account of the News he had receiv'd from thence, ——That the Remnant that were left of the Captivity in *Judæa* were in great Affliction and Reproach; that the Wall alſo of *Jeruſalem* was broken down, and that the Gates thereof were burnt with Fire.

This Account evidently relates to ſuch a Deſtruction of the Wall and Gates of *Jeruſalem*, as had lately happen'd; and conſequently can have no Relation to the Deſtruction of *Jeruſalem* by *Nebuchadnezzar*; foraſmuch as between the Time of *Nebuchadnezzar*'s deſtroying *Jeruſalem*,

ſalem, and the 20th of *Artaxerxes Longimanus*, there were, according to your own Chronology, no leſs than 143 Years.

The Account, therefore, which *Nehemiah* receiv'd concerning the Wall and Gates of *Jeruſalem*, plainly ſhews, that in the 20th Year of *Artaxerxes Longimanus*, the third Wall and Gates had been but very lately demoliſh'd; and conſequently that the ſaid Wall had been built, and the ſaid Gates ſet up, ſince the Return of the Captivity in the Reign of *Cyrus*; and conſequently that *Nehemiah* was not the firſt who rebuilt the Wall, and ſet up the Gates of *Jeruſalem*, ſince the Time of *Jeruſalem*'s Deſtruction by *Nebuchadnezzar* King of *Babylon*.

Your firſt Suppoſition therefore is manifeſtly falſe, as being directly contrary to Scripture:

And as to your Second, whoever will read *Nehemiah*, or *Joſephus*, will find it to be without any manner of Support.

For, all that *Nehemiah* deſir'd, upon having heard that the Wall and Gates of *Jeruſalem* were broken down and burnt, was, that he might go to the City of his Fathers Sepulchre to build it; and that Letters might be granted him to the Governors beyond the River, that they might conduct him into *Judah*; and that he might have a Letter to the Keeper of the King's

King's Foreſt, to the end that he might be furniſh'd from thence with ſuch Timber as he had occaſion for. And all this was readily granted by the King.

But then it muſt be obſerv'd, the Leave here given was only a verbal Leave or Licenſe; and the Letters granted were only of a private Nature: And therefore, neither is the ſaid Leave, nor are the ſaid Letters, any where dignify'd by the Name of a Decree, either in *Nehemiah* or *Joſephus*.

If a Decree, as you aſſert, was iſſued out, how comes it to paſs that it is not any where recorded, or even ſo much as mention'd?

Three Edicts had been granted to the *Jews* ſince their Return from *Babylon* by the *Perſian* Kings; the firſt by *Cyrus*, the ſecond by *Darius Hyſtaſpes*, and the third by *Artaxerxes Longimanus* in the Seventh Year of his Reign.

Every one of theſe Edicts, 'tis remarkable, is expreſsly ſtil'd a Decree; and the very Copy of each Decree is given us.

But why does the Scripture take ſuch particular Notice of the ſaid Decrees, and paſs over in Silence that, which according to you, was not only a Decree, but even the greateſt which had been given?

In

In ſhort: From all the Accounts extant, it appears,——that a verbal Leave only, and not a Decree, was granted;——that the Wall and Gates of *Jeruſalem* to be built by vertue of that Leave, had been but a little before demoliſh'd;——that *Nehemiah* was not therefore the firſt Reſtorer or Rebuilder of *Jeruſalem*, ſince the Time of its Deſtruction by *Nebuchadnezzar*;——and conſequently that the Seventy Weeks did not begin in the 20th Year of *Artaxerxes Longimanus*. Therefore,

III. Since the Seventy Weeks did not begin in the 20th Year of *Artaxerxes Longimanus*, it plainly follows, that the Ending of the Seven Weeks, and Sixty and two Weeks, is, as well as the Beginning of them, erroneouſly fixed by the Hypotheſis which you have endeavour'd to vindicate. So that all you have amaſs'd together, in relation to your *Eaſtern* Year, is of no uſe, as to the Explication of the Prophecy.

I might therefore here juſtly diſmiſs your placing the End of the 69th Week ſo near, as within a Year of our Saviour's Death.

However, I ſhall conſider what you have urg'd for the Neceſſity of ſuch an Ending of the ſaid Week.

Becauſe the Prophecy declares, That there ſhould be unto Meſſiah the Prince ſeven Weeks, and ſixty and two Weeks; and that after the ſixty and two Weeks, the Meſſiah ſhould be cut off———You from thence argue, that our Saviour could not ſurvive a whole Year after the Expiration of the 69th Week:——That if he had, he could not then have been cut off after ſeven Weeks, and ſixty and two Weeks, and one Year alſo of another Week: —And that this had been inconſiſtent with, at leaſt not preciſely agreeing with the expreſs Character, that after ſeven Weeks, and threeſcore and two Weeks, the Meſſiah ſhould be cut off.

To this I anſwer:

1. That when the Time of an Event predicted is, as in this Caſe, given, the Event muſt neceſſarily be underſtood to have its Accompliſhment in ſome Part of ſuch a Portion of Time, as is of the ſame Denomination with the Time given in the Prediction.

Thus, for Inſtance: If an Event be foretold to happen after 69 Days, the Accompliſhment may be reaſonably expected in ſome Part or other of the 70th Day.

And in like manner, when a thing is foretold to happen after 69 Years, the Prediction is

ſufficiently verify'd, if, what was foretold, be accompliſh'd in any Part of the Year following.

The ſame is the Caſe in relation to the word *after* in the Prophecy; there being in it but one Denomination of Time, that of Weeks, given.

And therefore this Part of the Prediction, ——*That after Seven Weeks, and threeſcore and two Weeks, the Meſſiah ſhould be cut off*— had been fully verify'd, if our Saviour had been cut off in any Part of a Week of Years immediately following the Expiration of the ſixty ninth Week.

Your Explanation therefore of the word— *After* — in the Prophecy, is extremely fallacious.

2. Between the ending of the ſixty ninth Week, and the Exciſion of the Meſſias, there was a much longer Time than you are willing to allow.

For, immediately upon the *Baptiſt*'s Impriſonment, we find our Saviour * openly declaring, that the Time was fulfill'd; thereby

* Mark i. 15.

evidently referring to a Time, which had been predetermin'd and foretold; and conſequently to the Completion of the ſixty ninth Week in the Prophecy; the Prophecy declaring, that from the going forth of a Decree for the Reſtoration and Rebuilding of *Jeruſalem*, there ſhould be unto Meſſiah the Prince ſixty nine Weeks.

Now, by your own Chronology, there were about three Years between the Time of our Saviour's ſaid Declaration, and the Time of his Death.

His Death therefore can't be placed ſo near the Expiration of the 69th Week, as it is, by the Hypotheſis you have embrac'd.

Let me add: The very Words of the Prophecy——*Unto Meſſiah the Prince*——do of themſelves plainly direct us to that very Moment of Time, in which the Prince, whoſe Coming is foretold, ſhould, in ſuch an eminent manner, become the Anointed One, as that upon the account of the Unction he ſhould then receive, he ſhould, in the moſt exalted Senſe, have the Name of Meſſiah given him.

The ſaid Unction our Saviour receiv'd at his Baptiſm, when the Holy Ghoſt deſcended upon him; and he was acknowledg'd to be

the Meſſias, in being proclaimed to be the Son of God by a Voice from Heaven.

For when (upon his having been baptiz'd) he entred upon his publick Miniſtry, he expreſsly declar'd, that he had received ſuch an Unction, as his Name Meſſiah imported; that the Spirit of the Lord was upon him, and that he had by him been anointed to preach the Goſpel to the Poor; that he was by him ſent to heal the broken in Heart, to proclaim Releaſe to Captives, and Reſtoration of Sight to the Blind; to ſet at Liberty them that were oppreſſed; ——to proclaim the acceptable Year of the Lord.

And in a ſhort time before his thus declaring his having been anointed by the Holy Spirit, he (as above related) every where taught, that the Time was fulfill'd.

Since then the Words of the Prophecy, unto Meſſiah the Prince, or, which is the very ſame, unto the Anointed Prince, evidently relate to the Time, when the Prince foretold was to be anointed; and ſince our Saviour, upon his being anointed, declared that the Time was fulfill'd; and ſince, laſtly, there were, even by the Chronology which you your ſelf follow, at leaſt three Years between the Time of his being anointed, and the Time of his Death; it is manifeſtly appa-

apparent, that the placing his Death within a Year after the Expiration of the 69th Week, is (if he was cut off, as it is now univerſally agreed on, in the 19th of *Tiberius*) directly contrary to the Intent of the Prophecy, and to the Hiſtory of the Goſpel.

IV. According to your Explanation of the Prophecy of the Seveny Weeks, there were between the Ending of the 69th Week, and the Beginning of the 70th, thirty one Years and four Months.

The Unreaſonableneſs (not to ſay Abſurdity) of this Way of Proceeding may, I think, be very eaſily demonſtrated.

Let it be ſuppoſed then, that you have rightly fixed the End of the ſixty ninth Week about a Year before our Saviour's Death. I from hence argue,

1. That ſince ſeven Years are, as you your ſelf contend for, a Week of Years; it will follow, that as ſoon as the ſixty ninth Week ended, another ſeven Years, or, in other Words, a Week of Years, would of courſe begin, even as neceſſarily as one Week of Days ſucceeds another Week of Days.

And

And that therefore, ſince according to you, our Saviour dy'd in the Year following the Expiration of the ſixty ninth Week; the Death of our Saviour would neceſſarily fall out in the Beginning of thoſe ſeven Years, or that Week of Years, which immediately commenc'd upon the Ending of the ſixty ninth Week; and that therefore our Saviour would have been cut off in a ſeventieth Week, and conſequently the ſeventieth Week in the Prophecy.

2. Since ſeven Years are a Week of Years, and there were, according to you, thirty one Years and four Months, from the Ending of the ſixty ninth Week to the Beginning of the ſeventieth; and conſequently from the Ending of the ſixty ninth, to the Ending of the ſeventieth, 38 Years and four Months; it will follow, that there were, from the Ending of the ſixty ninth Week to the Ending of the ſeventieth, five Weeks of Years, and three Years and four Months towards another Week. So that by this means, inſtead of there having been according to the Prophecy ſeventy Weeks, there would have been no leſs than ſeventy four Weeks, three Years and four Months, determin'd upon *Daniel*'s People and City.

And your ſeventieth Week, by ſo many Years diſcontinued from the ſixty ninth, would have begun, not at the Ending of a foregoing

Week,

Week, but about the Middle of the ſeventy fourth Week, from your Beginning of the ſeventy Weeks, in the twentieth Year of *Artaxerxes Longimanus.*

But ſomething you have offer'd in Defence of a diſcontinued Reckoning of the Seventieth Week, which I ſhall be here oblig'd to take notice of: As

1. That the ſaid Week is a Detach'd Week. An odd Kind of Week this! But, pray Sir, from whence was it detach'd, or by whom?

How can a Week, according to you commencing above four Weeks and three Years after the Ending of the ſixty ninth Week, be the ſeventieth Week of a Prophecy, in which ſeventy Weeks only are determined, and together mention'd as conjointly determin'd upon the *Jews* and *Jeruſalem?* But

2. 'Tis urg'd, that the ſeventieth Week muſt be thirty one and four Months ſeparated from the ſixty ninth, becauſe, by expreſs Characters, the ſeventieth Week was determined upon *Jeruſalem* for her utter Ruin and Deſtruction.

But here I am to learn, where theſe expreſs Characters are to be found.

For

For the Prophecy is expreſs, that the Seventy Weeks were determined upon the *Jews* and *Jeruſalem*, for no other than the following Purpoſes; *viz.* to finiſh Tranſgreſſion, to make an end of Sins, to make Reconciliation for Iniquity, to bring in everlaſting Righteouſneſs, to ſeal up the Viſion and Prophecy, and to anoint the moſt Holy One.

But theſe were all Events, which, by even your own Paraphraſe on them, receiv'd their Completion a conſiderable time before your Seventieth Week began.

And therefore the Deſtruction of *Jeruſalem* was an Event, with which the Seventieth Week in the Prophecy was no otherwiſe concern'd, than as the Death of the Meſſias in that Week was the Occaſion of that Deſtruction.

As for the Words which you ſo much inſiſt on: ——*He ſhall make a firm Covenant with many in one Week; and in the middle of that Week ſhall cauſe Sacrifice and Oblation to ceaſe*—— I could offer ſome probable Arguments, to confirm the Explanation which I have given of them in my Eſſay.

But to do this here, would be to encroach on the Defence I intend to publiſh.

And

And therefore at preſent I ſhall only obſerve, that tho' the Week, in which a firm Covenant was to be made with many, and in which Sacrifice and Oblation were to ceaſe, ſhould relate, as you explain it, to a Peace which the *Romans* made with ſome of their neighbouring Nations, and to the Deſtruction of *Jeruſalem* by the *Roman* Armies; yet that the ſaid Week could not poſſibly be, for the Reaſons above given, the Seventieth Week in the Prophecy; but only a certain Week, which was to commence ſeveral Years after the Seventieth Week was expir'd: Computation of Time by Weeks of Years being the moſt noted amongſt the *Jews*, and by them, and no other Nation, us'd.

So that upon the whole,——tho' it ſhould be granted, that the Week in which a Covenant was to be made, and Sacrifice and Oblation were to ceaſe, belong'd to the Deſtruction of *Jeruſalem* by the *Romans*; yet, foraſmuch as the ſaid Week (ſo underſtood) could not be the Seventieth Week in the Prophecy, (our Saviour being to be cut off after the Sixty ninth, and conſequently in the Seventieth; which, as has been above ſhew'd, was not determin'd upon *Jeruſalem* for her Deſtruction) it will follow, that by the Hypotheſis, which you have with ſuch Zeal endeav'our'd to obtrude upon the World, the

Seventy Weeks are by no means in any rational manner accounted for; they neither having their Beginning in the twentieth Year of *Artaxerxes Longimanus*, nor their Ending in the Deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*.

And therefore I can't in any wiſe think, that the ſaid Hypotheſis deſerves that very great Character which is given us of it in your Preface, *viz. of its appearing to be, upon all Accounts, infinitely better than any Hypotheſis that ever was yet extant of the Seventy Weeks.*

To conclude: —The Truth of the Remarks, which I have now offer'd to your Conſideration on the late Biſhop *Lloyd*'s Hypotheſis of the Seventy Weeks, entirely depends upon the Truth of the following Particulars:

1. That the Number of Years, from the firſt of *Cyrus* to the Deſtruction of *Jeruſalem* by *Titus*, is rightly aſſign'd in *Ptolemy*'s Canon.

2. That our Saviour dy'd in that Year, which, according to the ſaid Canon, was the nineteenth of *Tiberius*.

3. That the word נחתך in the Prophecy is rightly tranſlated —*determined*— and not —*cut out*.

Theſe

Theſe are Poſitions with you of undoubted Verity: And therefore I have no Occaſion here to add any thing farther, than that I am, as far as poſſible,

SIR,

Your very Humble Servant;

P. Lancaſter.